Faculty Research Grants
Project Period:
June 1, 2022 – May 30, 2024

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Proposal Submissions Due: Monday, February 14, 2022 (6:00 p.m., EST)
Anticipated Award Announcement Date: Monday, May 16, 2022
1. **Summary**

The North Carolina Space Grant (NC Space Grant) Faculty Research Grant is designed to provide support for faculty. This award is aimed at both emerging and established researchers who wish to pursue new research directions, develop new projects, and/or cultivate new collaborations to align their work with that of National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s (NASA) related Mission Directorates.

The goals of the Faculty Research Grant are to incentivize faculty to:

1) Develop new research directions or projects;

2) Cultivate collaboration among new partners (e.g., universities and colleges, NASA centers, federal laboratories or research facilities, the International Space Station (ISS) U.S. National Laboratory, commercial space and other industry partners, formal and informal education partners, state and local government agencies, etc.); and

3) Meaningfully engage undergraduate and/or graduate students in their research endeavors.

Recognizing that some faculty and student populations and institutions have historically been underserved and underrepresented within research opportunities and in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, NC Space Grant encourages submissions that encourage and enhance diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility (DEIJ).

2. **Background**

The National Space Grant College and Fellowship Program (Space Grant) was established by Congress under Title II of the NASA Authorization Act of 1988. Today the national Space Grant program includes over 1,000 partners from universities, colleges, industry, museums, science centers, and state and local government agencies. These partners work together to expand opportunities for U.S. citizens to understand and participate in NASA’s aeronautics and space projects by supporting and enhancing STEM education, research, and public outreach efforts.

NC Space Grant is a state-federal partnership with NASA. NC Space Grant has been administered at NC State University since 1991 and has provided leadership in strengthening connections with NASA’s research, technology, and science missions.

NC Space Grant strives to inspire and engage North Carolinians to explore the universe and our own planet by capitalizing on NASA’s unique contributions in exploration and discovery. The mission of NC Space Grant is to utilize NASA-related STEM opportunities to engage and inspire North Carolinians and to build a diverse future STEM workforce. To do this, programs are conducted in areas of fellowships, scholarships, education, research, and public service to promote, develop, and support aeronautics and space-related STEM training and programs.

It is a national and NC Space Grant priority to increase diversity in STEM, from university students, faculty, and staff to industry employees. Traditionally, minority groups and women have been
underrepresented in the STEM disciplines as students and faculty, as well as in the workplace after graduation. NC Space Grant champions diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility (DEIIJA) by proactively recruiting and training a diverse student and faculty population, as well as engaging a diverse range of public audiences across the state. We engage and serve communities that are representative of the populations where our programs operate.

3. Project Overview and Guidelines

3.A. Funding and Performance Period

NC Space Grant may award up to four (4) Faculty Research Grants subject to sufficient funding and quality of the received proposals. Funds will be awarded dependent upon the availability of federal funds. Applicants whose final proposal have been accepted may be asked to revise scopes of work, start and end dates, and budgets (Appendix C) to align with available funding.

The Faculty Research Grant will be awarded for a two-year period of performance for up to $40,000 per award (up to $20,000 per year).

The period of performance is June 1, 2022 – May 31, 2024:
• Year 1 up to $20,000: June 1, 2022 – May 31, 2023
• Year 2 up to $20,000: June 1, 2023 – May 31, 2024

Non-federal matching funds are required and must equal at least 50 percent of the federal funding request (i.e., for every one federal dollar, 50 cents match is required (0.5:1)). This cost-match should be demonstrated in the proposed budget. Facilities and Administrative (F&A or overhead) costs are not allowed. Even though indirect costs (IDC) may not be charged, they may be included as unrecovered IDC costs as part of the match requirement.

As required by NASA’s Office of STEM Engagement (OSTEM), all NC Space Grant-supported projects must submit semi-annual progress reports, as well as a final project report (details in Section 7). Semi-annual progress reports must include student demographic data; a list of all publications, proposals, presentations, patents, etc.; and information about key project activities, milestones, and/or deviations from the initial proposal.

3.B. Eligibility

• This solicitation is open to faculty members from all four-year accredited colleges and universities in the State of North Carolina, public or private.
• Only tenure-track or research faculty at the level of assistant professor or higher are eligible to apply.
• Awardees must be qualified to serve as a principal investigator (PI) at their respective institution.
• PIs who previously received a Faculty Research Grant under the last cycle (2020–2022) are not eligible to apply, since their research direction is no longer new. Prior applicants may be able to apply in future cycles in the case that other requirements are met.
• Faculty members participating in the Faculty Research Grant are not required to be U.S. citizens.
• Any student(s) supported with award funds must be a U.S. citizen(s).
• Submission is limited to one proposal per PI. There can only be one PI per project proposal. Although this grant encourages cross-institutional collaboration, only one PI may be funded (e.g., to travel to another lab or facility to participate in research).

Recognizing that some faculty and students populations and institutions have historically been underserved and underrepresented within research opportunities and in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, NC Space Grant encourages submissions that encourage and enhance diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility (DEIJA). NC Space Grant strongly encourages proposals from females and underrepresented minority groups.

4. Application Process

Full proposals will be submitted using an online proposal-management system portal: https://spacegrant.net/proposals/submit/?sponsor_id=1

The deadline for full proposals is 6 p.m. EST, Monday, February 14, 2022. The portal will automatically close after this time. Please do not wait to the last minute to submit your proposal. We will not be able to extend the deadline for anyone for any reason.

All elements of the proposal must be combined into a single PDF document. A complete proposal includes:

• A signed Title Page (PI and Authorizing Official)
• Project Description (10 page maximum)
• Project Timeline for Key Activities and Milestones (1 page maximum)
• Current and Pending Funding Support (1 page maximum)
• References Cited (pages as needed)
• Curriculum Vitae for the PI and Key Partners (2 pages per person)
• Letter(s) of Support and/or Intent (no page limit)
• Budget and Budget Narrative (4 page maximum)
• Recommended Out-of-State Reviewers (1 page maximum)
• Data Management Plan (2 page maximum)

Proposal Format

The following guidelines and restrictions apply to all proposals. Proposals not meeting these requirements will not be considered.

• Proposals must be submitted in PDF format.
• Proposals must adhere to the following format: one-inch margins all around, Times New Roman 12-point font, page numbers starting with the cover page as Page 1, and strict page limits as listed above.
• Proposals should contain only the requested sections.
Proposal Content

4.A. Title Page (1 page)

The cover page must include the following items: project title; period of performance (June 1, 2022 – May 31, 2024); total budget request (up to $40,000); PI’s name, institution, mailing address, phone number, and email; signatures from the PI and the Authorizing Official of the proposing institution (e.g., sponsored research officer or grant office); and the funding opportunity name (NC Space Grant Faculty Research Grant).

4.B. Project Description (10 pages maximum)

PIs are expected to use funds to further establish their professional career through new research projects or a new research direction related to a NASA Mission Directorate.

The goals of the Faculty Research Grant are to incentivize faculty to:

1) Develop new research projects or research directions;
2) Cultivate collaboration among new partners (e.g., universities and colleges, NASA centers, federal laboratories or research facilities, the International Space Station (ISS) U.S. National Lab, commercial space and other industry partners, formal and informal education partners, state and local government agencies, etc.); and
3) Meaningfully engage undergraduate and/or graduate students in their research endeavors.

This section should include the following:

- A detailed description of the proposed research goal(s) and a research plan;
- An explanation of how the project, research, and/or collaboration is new to the PI and why the change in direction is important to the PI;
- An explanation of the relevance of the proposed research to NASA Mission Directorates (Appendix A) and NC Space Grant’s strategic plan (Appendix B);
- A description of how this grant will help to further establish the professional career of the PI related to a NASA mission directorate;
- A description of how students will be meaningfully engaged, the number of students supported through research efforts, how DEIJA is being addressed through student recruitment, and pertinent student demographic data (if known); and
- How this grant will be leveraged to obtain additional research funding (and from whom, if known) and/or how the project will otherwise be sustained or scaled.

NASA is committed to student participation in research. It is strongly encouraged that undergraduate and/or graduate students be significantly involved. A significant award is a monetary award, or experience which includes one or more of the following: (a) has a value of greater than or equal to $3,000; (b) participation of greater than or equal to 160 hours; and/or (c) through a cost-benefit analysis proves to have significant impact on the student’s academic achievement and employment. All students supported must be U.S. citizens.
4.C. Project Timeline (1 page maximum)
Include a timeline that illustrates and/or describes the timeline for key project activities, deadlines, critical milestones, and other important dates within the period of performance.

4.D. Current and Pending Support (1 page maximum)
Identify current and pending support of the PI including: source of support, project title, amount of award, period covered by award, months or percent of time committed by the PI during the award period, and location of research. Describe past projects supported by NC Space Grant (if applicable).

4. E. References Cited (no maximum)
Use a standard bibliographic format to list references cited in your proposal.

4.F. Curriculum Vitae for PI and Key Partners (2 page maximum for each)
The PI must include a Curriculum Vitae (CV) that includes their professional experience and positions. A CV should also be included for any partner from a collaborating NASA center/organization/company who will play a key role on the grant (e.g., main point of contact at a NASA center).

4.G. Letters of Support and/or Intent (no maximum)
Letters of support may be from a university or college dean or department head, for example, in support of the change of research direction from the PI. A letter of support should also be included from any key collaborator(s) (e.g., universities and colleges, NASA centers, federal laboratories or research facilities, the ISS U.S. National Lab, commercial space and other industry partners, formal and informal education partners, state and local government agencies, etc.). Letters should outline the importance of the proposed research and the nature of the relationship under this grant (an email from the collaborator is acceptable). If this grant is intended to establish a new partnership, a letter of intent can be submitted that establishes the nature of the intended partnership and initial steps to be taken, which may or may not include resource commitments (e.g., human, assets, or financial).

4.H. Budget and Budget Narrative (4 page maximum)
Provide detailed budget information using the format outlined in Appendix C, as well as a Budget Narrative or justification. Complete the budget template for separate budget years (Year 1 and Year 2) and a cumulative budget for the entire period of performance, i.e., one page for Year 1, one page for Year 2, one page for a cumulative budget, and one page for the budget narrative. Cost-share requirements must be shown as required (50% non-federal matching funds).

Specific budget details are noted below:
- Direct salary expenses for PI and students should be separated by title or role with hours, rates, and total amounts for each person.
- Proposed travel should include the number of trips, destination, duration, etc. at state per diem rates.
- All students (graduate and/or undergraduate) supported must be U.S. citizens.
• Funds cannot be used to purchase equipment. Funds can be used to purchase supplies and materials.
• Overhead costs are not allowed. Unrecovered facilities and administrative costs, however, may be used for required cost-matching.
• The detailed budget must include a description of the required 50% non-federal matching funds.
• Unrecovered salary and travel can be used to meet the cost-match requirement.
• Utilization of funds solely for the purpose of supplementing summer salaries is discouraged.

4.I. Recommended Reviewers

Name and contact information for at least three (3) recommended out-of-state reviewers with specific or general knowledge about the proposed research area. Do not list individuals with known conflicts of interests.

4.J. Data Management Plan (2 pages maximum)

Consistent with the NASA Plan for Increasing Access to Results of Federally Funded Research, new terms and conditions about making manuscripts and data publically accessible may be attached to NASA awards. Some proposals may be required to provide a Data Management Plan (DMP) or an explanation of why one is not necessary given the nature of the work proposed. Any research project that does not require a DMP to be submitted shall be explicitly indicated. The type of proposal that requires a DMP is described in the NASA Plan for Increasing Access to Results of Scientific Research: https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/206985_2015_nasa_plan-for-web.pdf

5. Proposal Submission

Proposals should be submitted via online application by **6 p.m. EST on Monday, February 14, 2022**. Once complete, a single electronic file in PDF format is required; authorized college/university signature is required on the cover page.

Proposals must be submitted via the NC Space Grant online proposal system at:
https://spacegrant.net/proposals/submit/?sponsor_id=1

6. Review Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by out-of-state peers who are experienced in relevant NASA STEM fields, but not necessarily experts in each proposed field of research. Proposals will be evaluated for technical/scientific merit; alignment to NASA mission directorates and the NC Space Grant strategic plan; student engagement (with DEIJA consideration); and budget. Proposals will be scored as per the following parameters:

• Scientific and technical merit of the research goals and plan (25%)
• New research direction, project, or collaboration that may further establish the PI’s work under a NASA mission directorate (25%).
• Involvement of students (graduate and/or undergraduate) in research, including encouraging and enhancing student DEIJA (20%).
• Alignment of research to NASA Mission Directorates and NC Space Grant’s Strategic Plan (15%).
• Degree to which proposed research/project demonstrates effective use of funds, including meeting cost-share requirements (5%).
• Letter(s) of support or intent (10%).

Some examples of factors to consider in highly competitive proposals: technical and scientific merit, justification for new research direction, relevance to a NASA Mission Directorate, engagement with students in the research, encouraging and enhancing DEIJA, collaborative partnerships, and a budget that appropriately uses funds to complete the work. This is not an all-inclusive list.

Proposals recommended to NC Space Grant for funding will reflect reviewer recommendations, available funding, encouraging and enhancing faculty and student DEIJA, and current program priorities. Applicants should be aware that not all highly rated projects will be funded. NC Space Grant does not have enough funding to cover all the outstanding applications we receive.

7. Reporting Requirements

Reporting and Data Requests

Awardees will be required to maintain and provide data necessary for NC Space Grant to report to NASA’s Office of STEM Engagement (OSTEM) or other federally required data reporting systems. This data typically includes, but is not limited to: description of work performed; evaluation of the impact of work performed; number of students, teachers, staff, faculty, and general public involved; gender, race, and ethnic demographic information; birth date and contact information (email) of all significantly supported student participants; and a list of papers published, presentations given, conferences hosted/attended. This information may be requested at any time throughout the award period. Although this timeline may change at any time based on NASA OSTEM requirements, generally the following reports will be requested:

November 1 (annually): A student data table is required at this time for NASA reporting. Data tables shall be submitted in accordance with NASA reporting guidelines and due dates. PIs are also required to submit information on any peer-reviewed scientific research publications authored or co-authored by investigators funded, in whole or in part, by NASA.

May 1 (annually): A progress report is required by NASA at the end of the academic year. This report must include a description of progress toward significant tasks, milestones, student engagement, funding, etc. Updates to the student data table, as well as publications and presentation, must also be submitted at this time.

June 30, 2024: A final report is due within 30 days of the end of the award. The report must contain the following:

1. Executive summary of the project that highlights results, conclusions, and impacts. The summary should be written for general audiences and easy conversion into an NC Space Grant communications product, such as a blog post and/or social media posts. The executive summary should be between 500 and 1,500 words.
2. Statement on how the funding assisted the PI
3. Final student data table
4. Final list of papers submitted for publication that are relevant to the research performed during the period of this award. Include title, publication, date of publication, and author list. Kindly provide a copy of any publication to NC Space Grant, if allowable by the publisher.

5. Final list of all presentations delivered during the period of this award. Include presentation title, co-publishers, event, location, and date.

6. Final list of all patents that were applied for and/or approved during the period of this award.

7. Final list of all proposals submitted during the period of this award that are relevant to the research performed. Include proposal title, announcement of funding opportunity title, name of sponsor, amount of proposal, proposal due date, role of investigator, and funding status.

8. Final list of pending and actual support for PI. Include source, PI, percentage of time, and role of investigator.

9. High-resolution photos of the researcher, research team, research in progress, etc., suitable for sharing in blog posts and on social media.

NOTE: The collection and submission of student data is a REQUIREMENT of the NASA Office of STEM Engagement in order for NC Space Grant to receive annual funding. As a result, all NC Space Grant funded projects MUST report student participant data (names, dates of birth, gender, ethnicity, email address and field of study, etc.). To protect Personally Identifiable Information (PII), NC Space Grant utilizes reporting systems that are Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) compliant and meet or exceed the United States Department of Education Privacy Technical Assistance Center and the Student Privacy Policy Office data security recommendations.

Any peer-reviewed scientific research publications authored or co-authored by investigators funded, in whole or in part, by NASA are required to ensure that those publications are submitted to the PubMed Central system at www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov.

8. Other Requirements

Acknowledgment of Support and Communications
An acknowledgment of NC Space Grant support (logo and/or written) must appear in all publications, posters presentations, etc. of any material based on this funding in the following terms: “Supported by NC Space Grant.”

Awardees are required to interact with the NC Space Grant communications specialist (Lee Cannon, lacannon@ncsu.edu) to translate the findings of their research into a communications product(s) (e.g. news article, guest blog post, social media posts, etc.).

Optional: Attend the NC Space Symposium scheduled for Friday, Apr. 8, 2022.

Audit and Records
Financial records, supporting documents, statistical records, and other material pertinent to this grant shall be retained by the grantee for a period of at least three years following submission of the final project report and shall be made available to NC Space Grant upon request.

Payments
Contingent upon NC Space Grant’s receipt of funds, a sub-agreement will be established between the grantee’s institution and NC State University. The grantee institution shall receive payments under this grant through that institution’s Office of Sponsored Programs or equivalent grant office. Invoices must be submitted no later than 30 days after the last day of the month in which the expense was incurred. Late invoices may not be honored.

Notification of Absence
NC Space Grant shall be notified prior to the faculty PI’s absence from campus for a period of four months or more.

Transfer of Awards
If the faculty PI leaves the grantee institution or otherwise relinquishes active direction of the project, the institution must notify NC Space Grant as soon as possible. Awards may not be transferred if the PI leaves the grantee institution.

Suspension or Termination
This grant may be suspended or terminated if the grantee fails to comply with all the terms and conditions of the grant.

Nondiscrimination
No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under this grant on grounds of race, color, national origin, religious affiliation, physical disability, gender, or sexual orientation.

Compliance with Regulations
The PI must abide by all state and federal regulations related to research.

9. POINT OF CONTACT

Sandy Canfield
Assistant Director
srcanfie@ncsu.edu
919-515-5943
APPENDIX A: Strategic Framework for NASA

NASA Mission Directorates

NASA’s Mission to pioneer the future in space exploration, scientific discovery, and aeronautics research, draws support from four Mission Directorates, each with a specific responsibility.

- The Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate (ARMD) conducts vital research to make air travel more efficient, safe, and green, and to uncover leading-edge solutions for the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen) in the United States. ARMD’s fundamental research in traditional aeronautical disciplines and emerging disciplines helps address substantial noise, emissions, efficiency, performance, and safety challenges that must be met in order to design vehicles that can operate in the NextGen (http://www.aeronautics.nasa.gov).

- The Science Mission Directorate (SMD) leads the Agency in four areas of research: earth science, heliophysics, planetary science, and astrophysics. SMD works closely with the broader scientific community, considers national initiatives, and uses the results of National Research Council studies to define a set of “Big Questions” in each of these four research areas. These questions, in turn, fuel mission priorities and the SMD research agenda. The SMD also sponsors research that both enables, and is enabled by, NASA’s exploration activities. SMD has a portfolio of education and public outreach projects that are connected to its research efforts (http://nasascience.nasa.gov).

- The Human Exploration and Operations (HEO) Mission Directorate provides the Agency with leadership and management of NASA space operations related to human exploration in and beyond low-Earth orbit. HEO also oversees low-level requirements development, policy, and programmatic oversight. Exploration activities beyond low-Earth orbit include the management of commercial space transportation, exploration systems development, human space flight capabilities, advanced exploration systems, and space life sciences research & applications (http://www.nasa.gov/directorates/hea/index.html).

- The Office of the Chief Technologist (OCT) serves as the NASA Administrator’s principal advisor and advocate on matters concerning agency-wide technology policy and programs. The OCT is responsible for direct management of NASA’s space technology programs and for coordination and tracking of all technology investments across the agency. The office also serves as the NASA technology point of entry and contact with other government agencies, academia, and the commercial aerospace community. The office is responsible for developing and executing innovative technology partnerships, technology transfer and commercial activities, and the development of collaboration models for NASA (http://www.nasa.gov/offices/oct/about_us/index.html).

Please visit each NASA organization website to find detailed information about current projects and current areas of interest.
APPENDIX B:  
NC SPACE GRANT STRATEGIC PLAN

The complete NC Space Grant 2020-2024 Strategic Plan is available online under Mission and Strategic Plan.

Our Mission

North Carolina Space Grant utilizes NASA-related STEM opportunities to engage and inspire North Carolinians and to build a diverse future STEM workforce. In order to achieve those aims, we create and support unique opportunities for students, faculty, educators, and the public to participate in space-related research, education, and outreach programs.

Our Vision

NC Space Grant strives to inspire and engage North Carolinians to explore the universe and our own planet by capitalizing on NASA’s unique contributions in exploration and discovery. Our program aims to support science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) research, education, and public understanding that support current and future success at NASA and across North Carolina.

Strategic Goals

In support of meeting our mission and to continue to expand program engagement, opportunities, and impacts across North Carolina, NC Space Grant will concentrate efforts in the following strategic goals:

1. Support new knowledge generation to meet NASA-relevant interdisciplinary research and educational needs.

2. Prepare the next generation of STEM workers with the technical and professional skills to address current and future workforce needs.

3. Provide access to information and training in NASA-relevant subject matter to formal and informal educators, as well as to the general public, to inspire and educate.

4. Increase North Carolinians’ awareness of, and opportunities for engagement with, NASA-related research, education, and outreach products and opportunities.
APPENDIX C: Faculty Research Grant – Proposed Budget Year 1
(June 1, 2022 – May 31, 2023)

Institution: __________________________
PI: ________________________________

AWARD AMOUNT YEAR 1: $___________; COST-SHARE COMMITMENT YEAR 1: $___________
(Year 1 total up to $20,000. Cost-share requirement is at least 50 percent of the federal funding request.)

YEAR 1: June 1, 2022 – May 31, 2023

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<th>Cost-Share Year 1</th>
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*Indirect costs are not allowed. Unrecovered facilities and administrative costs may be used for required cost-sharing.
** NASA funds cannot be used to purchase equipment.

Budget Narrative: (please attach on a separate sheet)
APPENDIX C: Faculty Research Grant – Proposed Budget Year 2
(June 1, 2023 – May 31, 2024)

Institution: __________________________
PI: ________________________________

AWARD AMOUNT YEAR 2: $_____________; COST-SHARE COMMITMENT YEAR 2: $______________
(Year 2 total up to $20,000. Cost-share requirement is at least 50 percent of the federal funding request.)

YEAR 2: June 1, 2023 – May 31, 2024

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TOTALS: $_______________ $__________ $__________

*Indirect costs are not allowed. Unrecovered facilities and administrative costs may be used for required cost-sharing.
** NASA funds cannot be used to purchase equipment.

Budget Narrative: (please attach on a separate sheet)
APPENDIX C: Faculty Research Grant – Proposed Cumulative Budget  
(June 1, 2022 – May 31, 2024)

Institution: ___________________________
PI: ________________________________

CUMULATIVE AWARD AMOUNT: $______________  
(Cumulative total up to $40,000.)

CUMULATIVE COST-SHARE COMMITMENT: $______________  
(Cost-share requirement is at least 50 percent of the federal funding request.)

CUMULATIVE BUDGET: June 1, 2022 – May 31, 2024

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</tbody>
</table>

*Indirect costs are not allowed. Unrecovered facilities and administrative costs may be used for required cost-sharing.
** NASA funds cannot be used to purchase equipment.

Budget Narrative: (please attach on a separate sheet)